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ABSTRACT

This book describes the tech prep/associate degree initiative and illustrates its characteristics and promise through examples of collaborative efforts. Chapter 1 introduces a model or vision for tech prep and shows how it has grown from its vocational education roots to encompass a much broader educational spectrum. Chapter 2 addresses nine basic questions about tech prep. Chapter 3 focuses on contextual learning, the overall philosophy of learning that underlies tech prep reform. Chapter 4 addresses putting contextual learning to work in the classroom through the applied academics approach. It describes and provides examples of how these facets of contextual learning are incorporated into the applied academic curricula: relating, transferring, applying, experiencing, and cooperating. Independent studies on applied academics that demonstrate success are reviewed. Chapter 5 looks at the larger picture--at the way individual classes and the educational theories fit together into an overall course of study. It reviews some basic qualities that make this course of study different from other educational curricula and then looks at specific characteristics of the tech prep curriculum. Chapters 6 and 7 explore issues involved with instituting and maintaining tech prep at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Chapter 8 explores eight issues that the employer's role in tech prep should address. Chapter 9 addresses making positive change a reality in the educational system. Appendixes include a tech prep/associate degree concept paper, 19 references, and an index. (YLB)

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